



# NEWS RELEASE

**Date:** January 18, 2017  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Caltrans Prepares for Winter Storm Systems

Sacramento — Caltrans' crews statewide are preparing for the next round of winter storms and will be working 24/7 monitoring state routes and keeping roadways open and clear.

Meteorologists are predicting three more storm systems that will impact California. The first storm is predicted to bring at least .75 to 1.5 inches of rainfall to the Central Valley, with some locations in the foothills receiving up to three inches of rainfall from Jan. 18 to Jan. 19. Snow levels could drop as low as 4,000 feet in Northern California during the next few days.

Crews across the state are preparing by plowing snow off of state routes, clearing culverts and drains, pumping water from roadways, cutting dead trees, removing boulders, and working inches from moving vehicles while trying to keep highways and freeways clear of debris.

Over the past week, dedicated crews worked 12-hour shifts, responding to more than 100 short-term closures. Crews were able to open some roads but portions of the state routes are still closed due to another round of winter weather. Caltrans executed more than 30 emergency contracts in response to \$122 million in storm damage to quickly restore access to the traveling public. In a seven-day span, more than nine feet of snow fell onto state routes over Donner Summit in Northern California, and Caltrans responded to several flooded corridors along the coast and inland.

"I cannot say enough about the work and commitment exhibited by our workers as they respond to emergencies and keep the roads clear," said Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty. "Caltrans will continue its dedication towards keeping roadways open and will be working around the clock to help motorists reach their destinations."

Caltrans anticipates additional closures with the new storm systems; motorists should check road conditions frequently. For the latest road condition information, the radio may be tuned to the Caltrans Highway Advisory Radio (HAR) at 530 AM, 1610 AM or 1670 AM or call the Caltrans Road Condition Hotline at 1-800-427-ROAD (7623). Real time conditions are also available online and for mobile phones at <http://quickmap.dot.ca.gov>.



**BE WORK ZONE ALERT**





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During winter storm conditions, motorists should anticipate unexpected delays and closures. Caltrans strives to reduce the frequency and the length of unplanned closures on state highways. During major storms when traffic flow is heavy, Caltrans may meter traffic to ease congestion.

The following tips will assist you in making your winter driving experience safe and pleasant:

- Allow enough time for your trip.
- Be observant of everything around you.
- Remember – black ice is nearly invisible!
- Keep your fuel tank full and your windows clear.
- Drive as conditions permit – slower acceleration, slower speeds, and slower braking in winter conditions.
- Reduce speed and leave extra room between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- Use headlights, not just parking or fog lights in foggy, rainy, and snowy weather. Also remember that you must have your lights on when using your wipers.
- If you get stuck, stay with your vehicle and wait for help.
- Keep a blanket, flashlight and First Aid Kit in your vehicle.
- If visibility diminishes to the point that you no longer feel safe driving, do not stop in the traffic lanes.
- Use caution when crossing flooded roads and don't ignore warning signs. Water maybe deeper than you expect.

Important items to check on your vehicle are: brakes, coolant, tires, windshield wipers, defroster, heater, and exhaust systems. If possible have your vehicle checked by a professional mechanic.

All vehicles, including those with four-wheel drive or snow tires, should carry correctly sized chains when traveling during snowy weather. Highway signs will indicate if chains are required. If motorists do not have chains in their possession, they may not be allowed to proceed and risk being cited or fined.

## **CHAIN CONTROL REQUIREMENT LEVELS:**

No Restrictions - Watch for snow on pavement.

R-1: Chains are required on all commercial vehicles (trucks or buses). All other vehicles (cars, pick-ups, vans, etc.) must have either snow tread tires or chains on the drive axle.

R-2: Chains are required on all vehicles except four-wheel drives with snow tread tires. Four-wheel drive vehicles must carry chains in the vehicle.

R-3: Chains required - ALL VEHICLES - no exceptions.



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State Route 1 was closed on January 8 due to this massive slide near Leggett in northern California. Caltrans opened the highway on Sunday, January 15. *Photo courtesy of Caltrans.*



This slide blocked State Route 49 near Downieville on January 8. By the next morning, Caltrans was able to drill apart the large rocks and remove the debris. The road is currently open to local traffic but is restricted as material along the highway is still being cleared and slopes remain unstable in the area. *Photo courtesy of Caltrans.*

For more winter operation photos visit: <http://dot.ca.gov/cttravel/winter-storms-2017/>

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